

CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL AS & A LEVEL

Geography 9696

Syllabus Overview

Examinations 2027, 2028 and 2029

Understanding the whole syllabus

Geography explains the relationship between environments, people and places. Physical processes shape opportunities and hazards, while human decisions change landscapes and patterns of development. Maps, fieldwork and case evidence help you explain those relationships at different scales.

For Geography 9696, the content map below follows the approved subject briefing and the official syllabus. Labels group related areas for orientation; the detailed syllabus remains the authority for individual learning requirements.

Content map

Syllabus area or component	What the area covers
AS: Physical geography	At AS Level, physical geography covers hydrology, river processes and hazards; atmospheric processes and global climate change; and earth processes and mass movements.
AS: Human geography	Human geography explores population and migration, water resources and their management, and the changing nature and management of urban areas.
A Level: Selected environments and themes	For the full A Level, you add four specialised topics. For Paper 3, you select two from tropical, coastal, hazardous and arid environments. For Paper 4, you select two from climate-change impacts and governance, environmental issues and management, trade, aid and tourism, and disease and geography.
Geographical interpretation and evaluation	Throughout the course, you will interpret maps, graphs, photographs, statistics and other geographical resources. You must also apply detailed real-world examples, analyse relationships and construct coherent, evidence-based evaluations.

These areas should be read as a connected course. Begin with the foundational knowledge identified in the first part of the map, then build towards the applications and explanations that depend on it. Develop map and data skills throughout the course. Keep case evidence concise and connected to the process it illustrates; revisit fieldwork methods alongside the relevant physical or human topic. Where a row describes a choice of topics or components, study the selection required by your agreed route rather than treating all alternatives as compulsory.

Qualification and component choices

Qualification route	Components	Meaning
AS Level only	1 and 2	Standalone AS qualification, graded a-e
Staged A Level	1 and 2 first; then 3 and 4	Carry forward eligible AS marks within Cambridge rules and time limits
Full A Level in one series	1, 2, 3, 4	All required components; A Level graded A*-E

AS and A Level percentages refer to different qualification totals. A component can therefore have one weighting at AS and a different weighting in the full A Level. Confirm the entry option and any carry-forward arrangements with the centre.

At A Level, select two Paper 3 global-environment options and two Paper 4 global-theme options. The full list describes the choices available; it does not make every option compulsory.

The assessed skills

Assessment objectives describe the abilities Cambridge looks for across the qualification. The following explanations paraphrase the syllabus objectives; they are not additional topics or separate orientation tasks.

Assessment objective	Meaning for the learner
AO1 Knowledge and understanding	Select accurate subject knowledge, terminology and examples that answer the question, and explain their meaning.
AO2 Skills and analysis	Interpret the information, apply an appropriate method and explain the relationships or reasoning that support the answer.
AO3 Evaluation	Weigh evidence, explanations or methods, explain limitations and reach a justified judgement.

These abilities work together in an answer. Accurate knowledge supports application, while a clear explanation shows how the evidence or method leads to a conclusion. The balance varies by component, so the next lesson connects these abilities with the actual assessment formats.

Key pointers: Follow the stated examination-year syllabus, cover the required areas for your route and develop skills alongside knowledge. **Next:** Open **Assessment Overview**.